

MILESTONES

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Rocky Mountain Arsenal Community
Information Line 303.289.0136

EAGLES RETURN FOR WINTER TOUR

One of the most scenic settings for seeing the nation's symbol, the American bald eagle, is at your Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. For more than 20 years, the Refuge has been a winter home to the majestic birds and their young.

Each year, the eagles arrive in mid-October and usually stay until mid-April. While here, they participate in activities of the great outdoors: hunting, fishing, and roosting in cottonwood trees that line the lake edges. For the past four years, a pair of eagles has been nesting at the Refuge and has successfully hatched baby eaglets. This is quite remarkable considering the bald eagle is still on the endangered species list.

While the tall trees and lakes attract the eagles, nothing draws them quite as much as the abundance of prairie dogs, which are the eagle's main diet at the Refuge.

With their majestic appearance, 6-foot wingspan, and confident and intriguing composure, the eagles attract many Colorado residents to the Refuge each winter with the hope of glimpsing America's great living symbol. ■



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Women's Role at Arsenal Remembered

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s the nation battled against the rising power of totalitarian regimes, Marge Brando's life took an unexpected turn.

"The more (bombs) we put out, the sooner maybe everything would be over," she

remembered in an oral history recorded by the Rocky Mountain Arsenal in 1996.

Brando had been living in Commerce City and working for another company, when suddenly everything changed. The Japanese struck Pearl Harbor, and the United States became the arsenal of democracy.

Within seven months, the U.S. Army had constructed the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, and men began shipping out to fight overseas. With their departure, the duties of manning the home front were left to women, who joined the work force in record numbers to prepare the nation for war. Many of them were homemakers who had never expected to hold outside jobs.

The first woman reported for work at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal on August 7, 1942. In the next four months, approximately 400 women were hired to work at the site and eventually filled most positions at the manufacturing plant. Working five days a week on one of three eight-hour shifts, these women produced bombs around the clock as a deterrent to the Axis powers.

A shift of women typically manufactured anywhere from 250 to 300 bombs. The munitions were carefully produced through a process of filling, weighing, inserting components, painting, stenciling and packaging. Although most of the munitions produced at the Arsenal were never used in the war, they served as a strong deterrent. In fact, the Arsenal's first manufacturing plant, South Plants, operated around-the-clock and helped the United States out-produce the Axis power by 150 percent.

The "womanly role" of workers such as Marge Brando and her colleague Edna "Pete" Farce, who both

served in 1944, are captured on video as part of an Arsenal oral history project. Their role is also remembered in educational displays at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center.

The interviews and exhibits portray the people behind the Arsenal and the historic part they played in the nation's defense. Decades later, these women speak with pride about

their unexpected role as bomb makers. Although they had never planned to serve their country that way, they believe women today would also step forward.

"I think they would do the same things we did," Brando said. "Of

course, I hope they never have to." ■

The first woman reported for work at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal on August 7, 1942.



Photo property of U.S. Army

BASIN F WASTEPILE CLEANUP TO BEGIN SOON

One of the last major cleanup projects at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal (Arsenal) as it completes its transition into a premier national urban wildlife refuge will begin April 3.

Called the Basin F Wastepile project, the cleanup will involve excavating contaminated soil from a wastepile and transporting it to the Arsenal's on-site landfill. The project will start April 3 and end by October 2007. The Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge will be closed to the public in April and May for the start of the project.

The community learned more about the Basin F Wastepile in early March during two open houses, which the Arsenal hosted with the Environmental Protection Agency, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and Tri-County Health Department. The sessions gave residents an opportunity to learn about the project and ask questions of Arsenal employees and regulatory agencies.

The Basin F Wastepile may be familiar to long-time residents, who will recall odor problems from the cleanup

done in the late 1980s. During that initial work, crews unearthed all 93 acres of Basin F at once, which exposed the soil to the air and made it difficult to control odors. Community members complained and Arsenal staff attended meetings to address community concerns. The area was covered as soon as possible while long-term cleanup plans were developed.

That experience offered valuable lessons, which the Arsenal incorporated into the final plans that regulatory agencies approved. The cleanup will use proven preventive odor controls, such as excavating less than one acre of soil at a time, using odor-suppressing foam and covering the site with soil and thick plastic covers. Weather monitoring and 24-hour odor monitoring will also take place.

If you would like to learn more about the Basin F Wastepile cleanup, please call the Rocky Mountain Arsenal Community Information Line at 303-289-0136, visit the Arsenal online at www.rma.army.mil, or call the Tri-County Health Department 24-Hour Odor Response Line at 303-286-8032. ■

SAND CREEK LATERAL UNDERGOES FURTHER CLEANING

As part of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal's comprehensive cleanup program, biologists have identified areas at the site that might pose a risk to wildlife after the main elements of a cleanup project are completed. To make a determination, soil samples are taken in these areas. This sampling program found that a portion of contamination remained adjacent to a completed cleanup project, the Sand Creek Lateral (Lateral). Arsenal workers took more soil samples along the four-mile Lateral and results showed additional contamination along the banks of the ditch.

Located in the center of the site, the Lateral carried wastewater from past Arsenal manufacturing operations. Because of these activities, the soil in the ditch became contaminated and underwent cleanup. As part of the initial work, contaminated soil from the ditch was excavated. However, it was not realized at the time of the initial ditch excavation work that historical maintenance activities had

placed contaminated soil from the ditch along the banks of the Lateral.

To remove the remaining contamination, Arsenal workers are using excavation equipment to take soil from the areas. The soil is then disposed of in the Arsenal's two on-site landfills. Once the contaminated soil is removed, the Lateral is filled with clean soil. The project began in February and is expected to be completed by July.

A portion of the Lateral requiring excavation is located near the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. While the soil is being removed in this area, the Visitor Center will be closed during the weekday. To accommodate scheduled visitors during this time, a temporary structure has been placed near one of the Arsenal lakes, which will serve as the temporary visitor center. The Refuge will still hold drop-in and interpretive programs, tours, fishing and other Refuge activities on weekends at the Visitor Center. ■

Refuge Hosts Public Meeting to Discuss Fisheries Management

For more than 15 years, the fishing program at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal has lured Colorado anglers. Stocked with a variety of warm-water fish, Lake Ladora and Lake Mary offer anglers a local opportunity for high-quality catch-and-release sport fishing in the Denver-metro area.

Because the fishing program is an integral part of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), with more than 900 people last season enjoying a catch rate of more than one fish per hour, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is developing a Fisheries Management Plan for the Refuge.

As part of that process, the Service encouraged public participation and input on the Plan and hosted a public meeting on February 25, 2006. At the meeting, the public recreational fishing program and the Refuge's 2005 biological fishery survey results were discussed as well as fishing hours, public facilities and fishing regulations.

In 2005, the proceeds from the recreation use fee money was used to stock 8,000 Bluegills in Lake Ladora and 2,000 Bluegills in Lower Derby, construct a step trail that serves as a shortcut between Lake Ladora and Lake Mary, and purchase materials to sink Christmas trees into the lakes to provide more fish habitat.

Due to the Refuge's closure in April and May, fishing for the 2006 season will kick off on June 3. Anglers looking to get an early start can attend the required orientation training in May at locations in the community to learn about Refuge rules and regulations. The orientation, which lasts only 15 minutes, will be offered on-site in June through October. For more information on the fishing orientations, or the fishing program in general, please call 303-289-0930 or visit <http://www.fws.gov/rockymountainarsenal>. ■



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